

NASHUA

and The Region



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Staff photos by Dean Shattuck

The green leaves of the first tree to be planted where the asbestos-filled Johns-Manville plant once stood surround John DeVillars of the Environmental Protection Agency as he speaks at a cleanup celebration Monday morning at the Bridge Street property in Nashua. A small patch of grass accompanies the maple tree at the site, and the entire area is expected to soon be covered in greenery. Through the leaves to the right of DeVillars are U.S. Sen. Bob Smith, R-N.H., and state Sen. Debora Pignatelli, D-Nashua.



Bonnie St. Pierre, chairwoman of a Johns-Manville neighborhood task force that worked closely with federal, state and local officials to get the site cleaned up, reads one of the thank-you coffee mugs she handed out at the celebration. John DeVillars, left, and Mayor Donald Davidson listen.

Nashua strikes out on grant to study Johns-Manville land

■ City had requested \$187,000 from EPA to explore redeveloping the site.

By GRACE F. MURPHY
Telegraph Staff

NASHUA - The city has been turned down for a third time on a request for a federal grant it hoped to use to study how to redevelop the land where the former Johns-Manville plant once stood.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grants allow communities to study

"brownfields," which are former industrial sites that would be suitable for development if cleaned up. Money from the grants cannot be used on remediation efforts, but it can be used by communities to study the extent of problems on sites or come up with redevelopment plans.

Nashua sought \$187,000 so it could determine the scope and nature of any problems remaining after the plant was demolished; community outreach; economic and market studies and strategies; and planning and engineering studies.

Nashua was the only city in

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Superfund Records Center

SITE: Johns-Manville

BREAK: 13.3

OTHER: _____

Grant

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New Hampshire to apply for the brownfields grant, but it was up against 14 applications from New England and 92 nationwide.

Of the 160 applications received in 1996, the EPA funded 11. This year, there was \$5 million available

Each application was evaluated by panels made up of regional and national EPA members and representatives from other agencies. The final selections were made by the senior EPA management staff.

John DeVillars, the EPA's New England administrator, described the process as "extremely competitive."

from our office work with the city and advise them of their prospects in future rounds," DeVillars said.

Roger Hawk, the city's Community Development Division director, said the city won't wait for funding but will start discussing future uses for the property now. Nashua is working to update its "master plan," which is a policy guide for future

"It seems like an appropriate time to look at the whole area and how it should be used in the future," Hawk said. "We hope to work with and have discussions with the neighborhood task force group."